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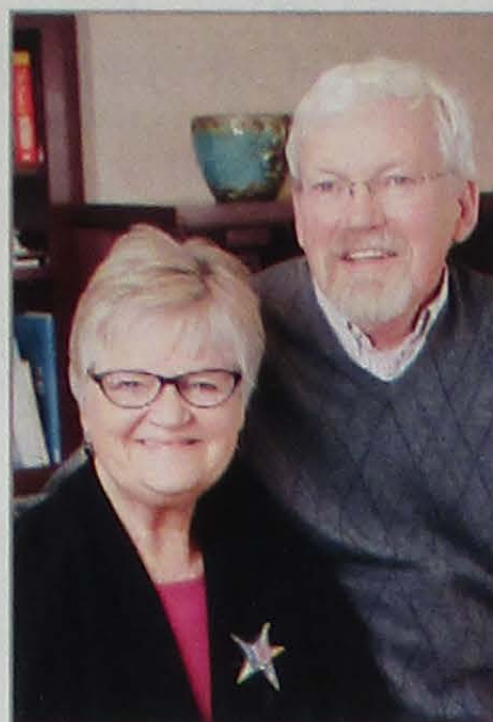

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Actual Ornament Design



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MEDICAL CENTER
Hospice Home Care and
Israel Family Hospice House

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ON THE COVER: FRIENDS FIND
JOY OF GIVING IN PROVIDING
AND SERVING HOME-COOKED
MEALS. PHOTO BY: JANE M.
DEGENEFFE

EDITOR'S NOTE

The Thanks of Giving

The holiday season will soon be upon us and for many of us it's a time to reflect on the past year, the changes that have happened in all our lives and be thankful for what we have and for the people in our lives.

Giving thanks can be different for everyone, and you will see that on the pages of this issue of Facets.

Friends, family, opportunities. It's all there.

For many, the abundant opportunities that exist in our community to give is reason enough to be thankful. Hmmm. Thanks for giving. Thanksgiving. You probably see where I'm going with this.

Someone in each of our lives once told each of us that giving back to the community in some way, shape or form was a gift all in itself. And that of course is true.

But in giving, you realize that those who receive your time and abilities are giving thanks for it.

There are plenty of people right here in central Iowa whose 2014 hasn't been full of joy and blessings. For all too many, 2014 was a year of struggle and loss.

Many of us, caught up in the bustle of our daily lives, forget about those who are less fortunate and are struggling to make ends meet, but if you've ever had the opportunity to meet them and talk with them over a warm meal at a local shelter, the appreciation they show for what they do have is remarkable.

They are thankful for the availability of a meal once a day. They are thankful for a warm blanket

and bed (maybe just a cot) at a shelter to get out of the cold. They are thankful for a welcoming hand on their shoulder, or a hug that let's them know they haven't been forgotten and that someone does indeed care. They are thankful for an acknowledging, understanding smile.

For many of us, those opportunities to give back in even the smallest of ways, can in themselves be reason to give thanks. Thanks that there are lots of people out there willing to help and lend a hand when called upon.

So, this holiday season, when you see the need, step up and fill it. Because by giving, you might just in return receive a warm-hearted thanks in return. After all, isn't giving to others supposed to be the best gift we can give ourselves?

Michael Crumb

Editor



FEATURES



6 | LEADERS OF THE LADLE

Norma Erickson and Arleen Greenough have been putting together home cooked meals for the community for 13 years. See what it means to them to do this.



10 | A DOUBLE DOSE OF SERVING

Q&A with Cathy Twito to see how things are going for the Overflow Thrift Store.

DEPARTMENTS

14 | EVENTS

See what's in store for this year's Downtown SnowMagic on Main Street.



18 | CULTIVATE

Jan Rikkenbach takes you through cleaning up your garden this fall, but she explains why not to clean it up too much.



19 | FITNESS

Some helpful tips on how you can give back to the community while being active at the same time.

20 | SAVOR

Kathleen Purvis explains some ways you can enjoy the best of pumpkins this Holiday season.

22 | HOME DECOR

Paige Jones shares a few of her secrets on home decorating ideas for this autumn.

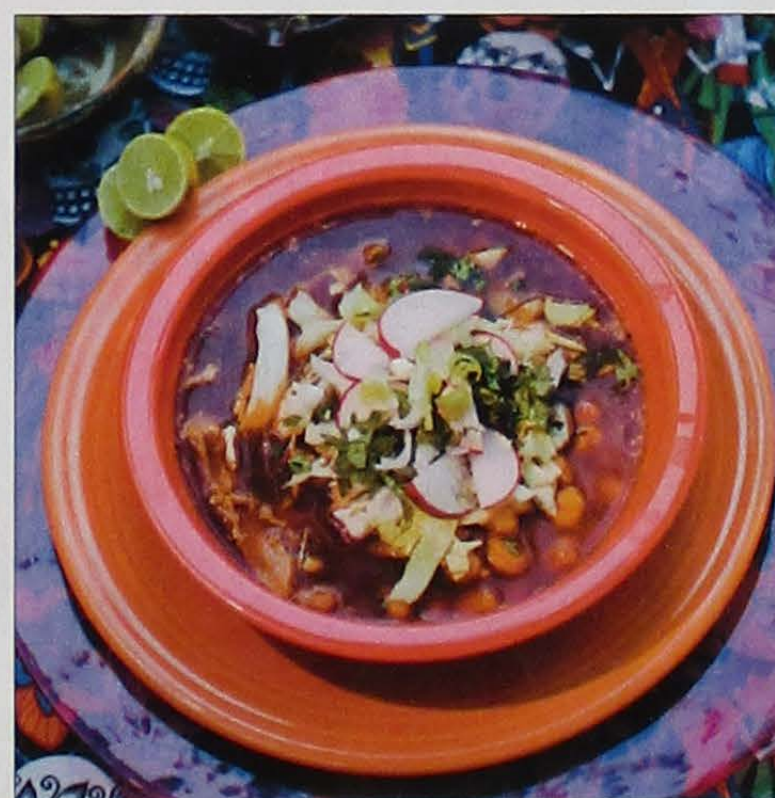


24 | SAVOR

Chris Macias shares his recipes on Homemade posole. Something new to try for your fall celebrations.

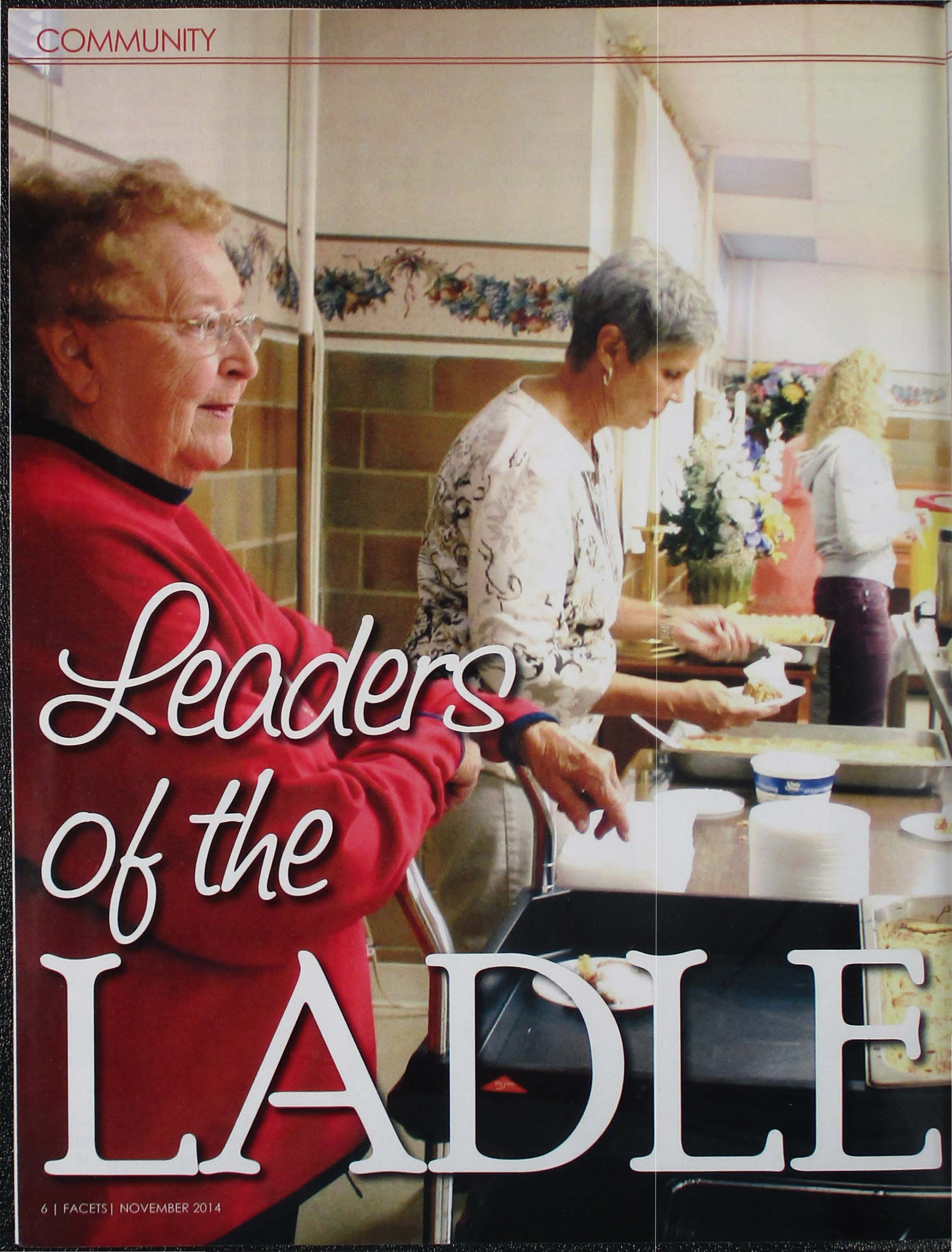
28 | BEAUTIFY

Mary Clare Lokken takes time to celebrate some people that have made her life better.



30 | PROVIDE

What does balance mean as we approach the holiday season? Karen Petersen advises on what it means and how to find that balance.



Leaders of the LADIE

Norma Erickson and Arleen Greenough have been putting together home cooked meals for the surrounding community for 13 years.

BY JANE M. DEGENEFTE

They came into the store with one intention: to buy chicken for next week's "Banqueting Table." Their joyful intention somehow penetrated past the mere ringing up of their items as I cashiered their purchases. I inquired, "Looks like you have a plan! Is there a special meal you are organizing?"

"Oh! Yes!" The plan unfolded....Chicken Casserole with diced chicken, swiss cheese, cream of chicken soup, and stovetop stuffing. You're welcome to join us! We begin serving at 5:30p.m. in Slater at the Bethlehem Lutheran church. You don't have to be Lutheran."

I smiled and laughed at her last comment about not needing to be Lutheran. Her welcoming countenance with such warm enthusiasm gave me a sense of assurance in the common good we all seek. I wondered how many random acts of kindness do they accomplish in their weekly routine?

Norma Erickson and Arleen Greenough have been putting together home cooked meals for the surrounding community for 13 years. Confirmation classes were the impetus that brought alive such a willing spirit. They were an integral part of the weekly routine during the school year, and for the convenience of the families involved with those classes the church set up meals to share so that it was easier to get to class.

Now the meals are open to the community.

Bethesda Evangelical Lutheran Church on Northwestern Avenue in Ames also has an open table to the community for their weekly confirmation classes, but it is not as well known as the Slater community. Bethesda, however, is very well known for the food pantry and clothes closet that they offer.

Norma and Arlene are a tour de force when it comes to rolling out these weekly meals.

Over the years they've organized volunteers, menus, and grocery lists; as well as assigning tasks to each who are interested in being a part of the joy of these gatherings. Church member, Vicky Brown likes to prepare and serve desserts, Steve Bond likes to cook and serve, Rose Arrasmith has started serving these meals since her retirement. Rose has observed that there had been a church schism around the time Norma and Arlene began a steady routine of fellowship surrounding the meals in the church basement. She remarks that the weekly meals did more than anything to bring people back together than any other thing the church tried to do around the time of the schism. Maria Erickson "gets to be with Mom" (Norma) and so shows up to dish out the treasures from one of the food tables. Janet Mason likes to serve the meat dishes every week.

"Need any help?" A new volunteer shows up last minute

knowing she will find good company, good food, and warm generous people to share a meal with. Volunteers, as many as 20-30, rotate once every 3 months. Of the 150 or so church members these basement tables are filled each week. Everyone is aware of where to find a warm meal and warm heart for conversation. Such trusted closeness along with weekly predictable meals generate a healthy atmosphere for memories to last a lifetime. Here in the little town of Slater, IA one can find predictable loving care.

The tables fill up fast once 5:30 rolls along. A teenager sits at one table doing homework. Other teens from confirmation class sprawl around the couches in a very horizontal format with headphones. Adults meander in to visit and experience each other while they eat and wait for their youth to be finished with class or to catch up on what is going on in other family lives. Smaller children run about and wait for parents to help them find a seat and eat. One gentleman is taking a carry-out with 4 packages. Norma tells me that the carry-outs are required to give a donation in the donation box on the counter.

Predictable home cooked menus circulate throughout the school year. Roast beef with mashed potatoes and gravy, pork chops (120 or so), ham balls, meatloaf, chicken casserole as well as a variety of desserts. Milk, coffee, tea or juice are a part of the routine of

sharing this community meal.

Arlene is the quieter of the two ladies who have devoted themselves to lead the ladles. Her enthusiasm is clearly stated in her baking achievements each week, as well as the sparkle in her eye. Arlene hand mixes, kneads and bakes up to 9 dozen loaves of delicious breads and rolls. The time commitment sounds astounding, yet for Arlene it is truly one that bubbles over into personal gratification. If need be a clipboard is circulated after a church service for upcoming opportunities at the Banqueting Table. It is obvious that this group of people see the abundance God has provided and want to give back a portion from their own time and energy.

Sharing, caring, and nurturing. These people are excellent examples to us all. The fortitude of these leaders of compassion (a.k.a. Leaders of the Ladle) provide wonderful memories for many. The church leadership of Bethlehem Lutheran has allowed for their work to continue by assuring them if ever there is a shortage of money for supplies, all they need to do is ask and the pastor will find a way to make it happen. So far, the donations have been enough to keep the program going. Perhaps too, they enjoy the company and sharing of food. The simple gesture of sharing food together creates a bond. The conversations that swim around the tables may vary, yet they are all experiencing



Arleen Greenough in plaid, helps serve a meal at Bethesda Lutheran Church in Slater. PHOTO BY JANE DEGENEFEE

compatibility. They like the food, but more it is the relating, the predictability and sound of someone else's voice.

Conversations that sound like family circulate around the room.

"How's Randy doing?"

"Well, we don't know. He was suppose to see the Dr. yesterday."

"Did you know Sam had a stroke? I got a card from Betty and they won't be coming for the holidays this year."

"Pass the salt, please."

As the meal continues and kids float in from school activities, parents greet their children with hugs before they begin their meal.

Not only is the comfort of feeling fed and warm a great contribution to a human life, but the mere exchange of conversation can give a sense of well-being. The meals accomplish this. Oftentimes, the kids help with the clean-up and chores that follow.

Within our grasp are tangible ways to "give back" from the abundance we've all been gifted with. No doubt there are other states with their towns and cities within sharing from the profusion of food that is available. The issues surrounding hunger could possibly lessen if we each take to heart the availability of what our community storehouses hold. With many combined and individual efforts, perhaps we can

lessen the impact of poverty and loneliness.

Here listed are a few of the Ames area food pantries and services.

Food At First

Food At First <http://foodatfirst.wordpress.com> Free meals at First United Methodist Church, 516 Kellogg Ave., Ames, IA. Sun, Mon., Tue., Thurs., and Fri. 5:30 pm-6:15 pm and Sat 11:30 am-12:15 pm. As noted on their website: "The free meal program serves seven meals per weekend is open to anyone who is hungry, no questions asked. Most are evening meals, and all are served at First United Methodist in downtown Ames. Perhaps the most interesting

aspect of the program is our source of food: almost everything that we serve would otherwise have been thrown away by local grocery stores and food services, but has been turned into wonderful, tasty meals! Because of that, we have PLENTY of food for anyone who could use a little help." Food At First has yet another remarkable source of provision! It is truly an ecumenical effort in that any type of denomination or non-denomination church function can organize to serve. Here is a quote from John and Carlene Malin who have a weekly time of fellowship within their home and encourage those who attend to get involved in other people's lives: "Our Connection Group from Cornerstone Church has served several times at Food At First in the past three years. We love serving at Food At First. Our team looks forward to helping each time we have the opportunity to serve. We have had nearly 100% involvement from our Connection Group. We enjoy meeting and talking with those coming for a meal as we serve them, we enjoy preparing the food, and working together as we are cleaning up afterwards... Each time we serve we reminisce about the people and the joy we received from serving others. If you haven't taken the opportunity to serve others, our team would highly recommend serving at Food at First. The blessings are unlimited when we serve others."

St. Andrew's Lutheran Church

St. Andrew's Lutheran Church website at www.standrewsames.org.

St. Andrew's Lutheran Church offers a free Wednesday night meal from 5:30-6:30 pm. People can come anytime within that time period to eat. It is followed by a seeker service (worship service with group discussion) from 6:30-7:15 pm.

St. Andrew's offers this meal to reach out to adults coming from work, students coming from athletic practices, parents rushing to pick up children from various activities, and anyone needing a meal and fellowship. St. Andrew's goal is to 'reach out with Christ's love' through food. The meals are planned to be healthy and nutritious.

Meals are being served at 5:30p.m. on Wednesdays at St. Andrews Lutheran Church, ELCA, 209 Colorado Ave., in Ames. A 45-minute worship follows the meal and includes song, prayer, small group scripture discussion and holy communion. Nursery care for children age 4 and older is provided.

Bethesda Lutheran Church

1517 Northwestern Avenue
Ames, IA 50010
(515) 232-6256

Services: Church and Food Pantry at Bethesda serves people in the community who are in need of assistance. A variety of foods from the different food groups are provided to the recipients. Recipients may come for food every thirty days if they have this need. Hours: Mon-Fri 8 am-5 pm

Calvary United Methodist Church

1403 24th Street
Ames, IA 50010
(515) 232-6329

Services:

- Clothing
- Food Pantry
- Furniture Bank

Grand Avenue Baptist Church

612 24th Street
Ames, IA 50010
(515) 232-8803

Hours:

Varies by service and program

Evangelical Free Church

2008 24th Street
Ames, IA 50010
(515) 232-2765

Services:

May be visited every other month. One bag of food per household is available. Proof of Ames residency is required (e.g., photo identification with Ames address).

Hours:

Hours vary by program and service
Tuesday 2-4pm and Thursday 9a-12 noon

Harvest Vineyard Church

1627 South High Avenue. Ames, IA 50010
(515) 290-6881

Services:

Food Pantry: Can visit 1 time a month
Provides bread and other food items.

Clothing: Helps with clothing and books as available 1 time a month

Hours:

Hours vary by service and program,
Serving Center: Saturday- 10 am - 12 pm
Fri 4 pm-6 pm

Jesus' Right Hand

110 Duff Ave.
Ames, IA 50010
(515) 232-3074

Services:

- Food
- clothing
- Furniture Pantry
- Can visit 3 times in 6 months

Hours:

Furniture pantry (Tue 10 am-11 am for emergencies only, Thu 10 - 2)
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Overflow Thrift Store:

A double dose of serving

BY TODD BURRAS

Ames resident Cathy Twito couldn't haven't imagined how a short-term mission trip to Haiti in January 2013 would affect not only her life but also the lives of scores of other Ames people in the aftermath of her return.

But then again Twito, the wife of Ascension Lutheran Church minister Roger Twito, is always open to the nudging of divine providence.

"The contrast in the amount of abundance we have here in this country in comparison to the extreme lack of basic necessities we had just witnessed among our newly acquainted Christian family in Haiti was stark," Twito said. "I began to pray and ask the Lord how can

I live in this country while still extending my hand to not just a distant group of people, but now friends with recognizable faces and names."

Through extensive prayer, scripture reading and meditation on the "Sermon on the Mount," a vision began to take shape in Twito's mind.

"It was at that point that I believe God started the vision for a non-profit thrift store," she said. "It all started making sense. This could be a store where people could donate their excess, the stuff they are tripping over, filing, dusting, storing and organizing that's cluttering up their lives and sold. The profit could then be used to help the poor."

More soul-searching was followed by contacts with Mike

Sulc and Tami Hicks, both of whom had similar leanings, and before long Overflow Thrift Store was more than just a vision, it was a reality of 9,500-square-feet of commercial space with a roof over it at 202 S. Duff Ave. The store opened July 25 of this year.

For this month that's highlighted by the Thanksgiving Day holiday, Facets writer Todd Burras caught up with Twito to hear how things are going for the Overflow Thrift Store.

Q: What's the mission of the store?

A: We have three goals: We would like to be a place that people can donate their excess so it can serve the poor. We would like to be a cute, clean and creative marketplace for the frugally minded. We

would like our surplus (profit) to serve the poor in such a way that it helps them on their way to sustainability.

Q: What all was involved in getting contributions for the store before it opened?

A: Oh, my, it wasn't just getting the donations to sell. There was an endless amount of people who came to lend a hand to setting up the store and getting things into place. We had limited start-up funds, so we used as many free and creative ideas as we could for display pieces and walls.

Q: How did you end up in the building at your current location, 202 S. Duff Ave.?

A: God is good. We were looking at different commercial pieces and nothing felt exactly right.

OVERFLOW THRIFT STORE EMPLOYEES, FROM LEFT, TAMI HICKS, CATHY TWITO AND MIKE SULE WORK ON THE FINISHING TOUCHES BEFORE THE STORE'S GRAND OPENING. PHOTO BY NIRMAENDU MAJUMDAR/AMES TRIBUNE

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COMMUNITY



Co-founders of the Overflow Thrift Store on South Duff Avenue in Ames, from left to right, Michael Sulc, Cathy Twito and Tami Hicks. PHOTO BY TIFFANY HILFIKER/FACETS

In the midst of that I saw the sign that said "9,500-square-foot commercial property to rent." I practically did a U-turn right on Duff to get the phone number. Within days we were negotiating terms with the owner.

Q: How many volunteers do you have?

A: I've lost count. But it's over 100 if you count everyone who's pounded nails, painted walls, sorted clothes, priced items to sell, taken things home to wash or mend, picked up deliveries, taken out our trash, received donations, done the accounting and legal work, etc. It is with very grateful hearts that we have had great support from so many. We have new people volunteer to join this team all the

time. The more people that volunteer, the more stuff we can offer to sell, which turns around to be more we can give to those in need.

Q: Did you have to go through the IRS to gain non-profit status for the business?

A: Yes, definitely. Like I mentioned before, we have come under the umbrella of another nonprofit as we get started. However, we are going through the immense paperwork and process to establish ourselves as our own nonprofit.

Q: How many customers do you serve per week/month?

A: I'm not sure I could count. It's not unusual

The more people that
volunteer, the more stuff
we can offer to sell, which
turns around to be more
we can give to those in
need.

for there to be a dozen people shopping there anytime we are open.

Q: What niche is the store filling in the community?

A: Who doesn't love a bargain? While we have Goodwill doing a great job on the west side of town, I think in our community, we have had a need for another thrift store. Also, I think people like the idea of making a difference in the lives of children in some areas of the world where life is just plain tough.

Q: Do you have one or two human-interest stories that you've witnessed that bare testimony to the fact that the store is providing a need within the community?

A: I could tell you many. ... The first day we were open, a gal came in and saw this deluxe children's puppet. She just hugged it and said how she had seen one once and always wanted one just like it to use as a teaching tool for her students. She was delighted. We've had a foreign Iowa State University student come in and purchase a chair for her bare apartment for just a couple dollars. We had an elderly woman come in who wanted to donate a couch as she was getting a new one and needed some help getting it out of her house. It was picked up and sold the same day. One gentleman came in to donate some things that had been his mother-in-law's who'd passed away. His wife was having a hard time letting the things go, but when she knew it would help the kids in Uganda, it made it easier to let go of stuff they didn't need.

One fun story was the gal who bought a very small ISU Cyclones shirt for her Chihuahua. She came in the next week to show us how cute he looked in it. I enjoyed the time when a

young man found a nice pair of black shoes he was going to wear to homecoming that night and was elated to find that they were \$3. There were a couple of young men looking for some Renaissance appropriate clothing. They not only scored in the clothing department but found some silver steins they could hang from their belts for 50 cents. I know they could hardly believe their luck. And then we have someone who comes in regularly to buy books for a classroom that needs more books for elementary age children. And then there's the gal who needed some exercise equipment because she has asthma and was thrilled at the piece that we offered for a killer price that would help her with that. We have had someone come in and bought some glitzy American girl doll clothes for her pet pig.

We know there are all sorts of people who come in to buy stuff to re-sell on eBay and that's another way we can pay it forward too!

Q: Where do the proceeds go?

A: Life to Life Africa serving orphans and widows in Zimbabwe, Children's Hope Chest in Uganda providing food and education for orphans, and United Christians International serving the poor in Haiti. We also have our eye on some local needs that we'd like to give to as we get more established.

Q: Anything special planned for the store around the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays?

A: We have an unbelievable amount of Christmas decorations. They will come out the middle of November. We are going to have special night of volunteering to decorate the store. It'll be great fun, quite beautiful and there will be great deals.

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Dean Hunziker



Keith Arneson



Tom Carey



Dan Carille



Katie Carmer



Amanda Davis



Brenda Pedigo Cloyd



Joyce Conley-Gibson



Gale Gehling



Ryan Gehling



Gregg Gray



Patty Grove



Lara H.



Dan Hunziker



Gene Johnson



Sarah Laaser-Webb



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John Livingston



Paul Livingston



Lisa Nady



Molly Neal-Wong



Lois Pedigo



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Annual SnowMagic celebration kicks off Nov. 14 in Ames



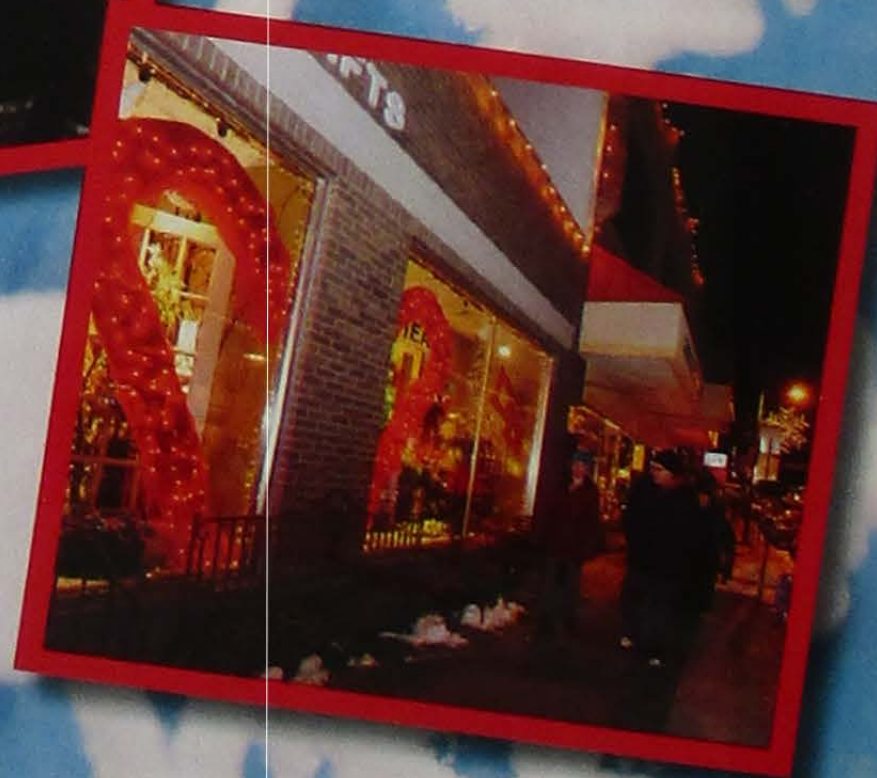
Above: Santa greets visitors downtown following last year's tree lighting ceremony. Right: Shoppers stroll along Main Street enjoying the store windows decorated for the holidays during last year's SnowMagic celebration.

The holiday season will officially kick off in Ames on Nov. 14 with the start of the annual Snow Magic celebration, beginning with the tree lighting ceremony at 6 p.m.

It will continue on Small Business Saturday on Nov. 29, where area shoppers are invited to shop downtown Ames on the day of Black Friday.

The Magic Snowflake Adventure also begins on Nov. 29, where shoppers are encouraged to look for SnowMagic snowflakes while shopping downtown and be entered into a drawing for gift certificates from participating businesses.

The annual celebration will continue on Dec. 6 with the Legend of Snow Magic.





As the story goes, in a land not so far away, there was a very special village that has come to be known as Downtown Ames. In the historic buildings in this magical village you can find unique shops, delicious things to eat and drink and, most importantly, lots of friendly folks. The people of Ames gather in this area throughout the year, but during the holiday season an especially festive feeling surrounds this part of town. Lights twinkle all down the street, snow falls softly, and a giant tree enchants this special land. The story goes that on one day of the year, if you are a true believer

in the holiday spirit, you can visit the shops downtown and if you're lucky, you may catch a glimpse of an elf or two. The shopkeepers are very carefully disguised elves but on one day a year, you can see them out of their common disguises. This year, the rumor says that the "day of the elves" will fall on the sixth of December, but no one really knows. Do you believe in the holiday spirit? Come downtown and visit the shops to see if the legend is true!

And then on Dec. 13, residents are invited to join together for Caroling Day and get those last minute gifts.



Above: Santa greets visitors downtown following last year's tree lighting ceremony. Below: Shoppers enjoying last year's SnowMagic.

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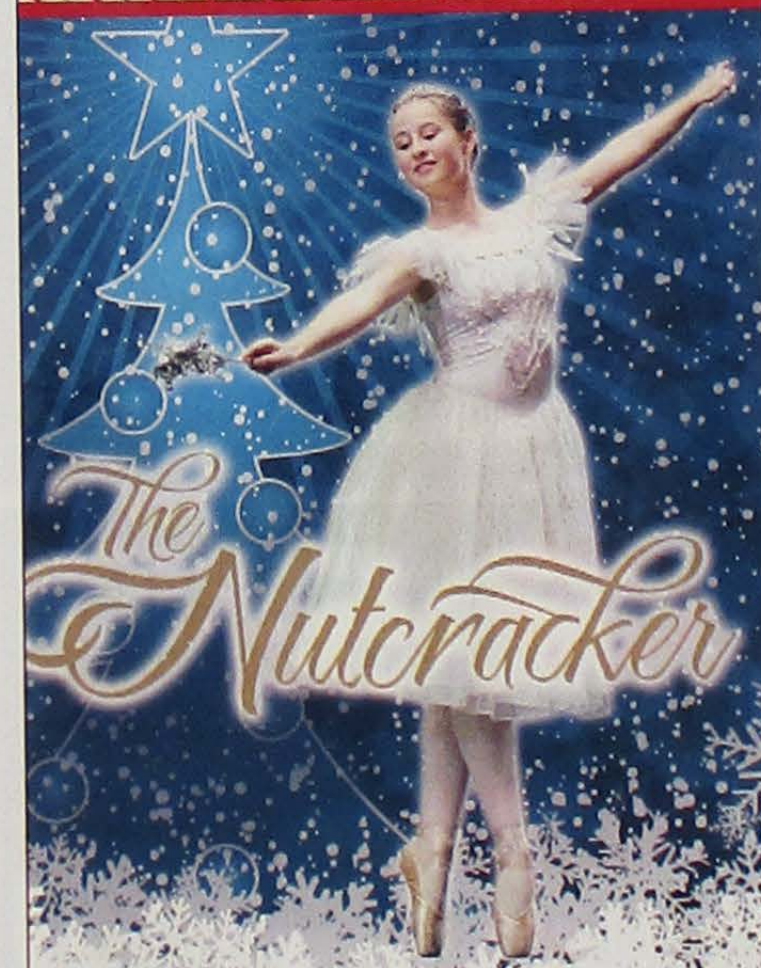


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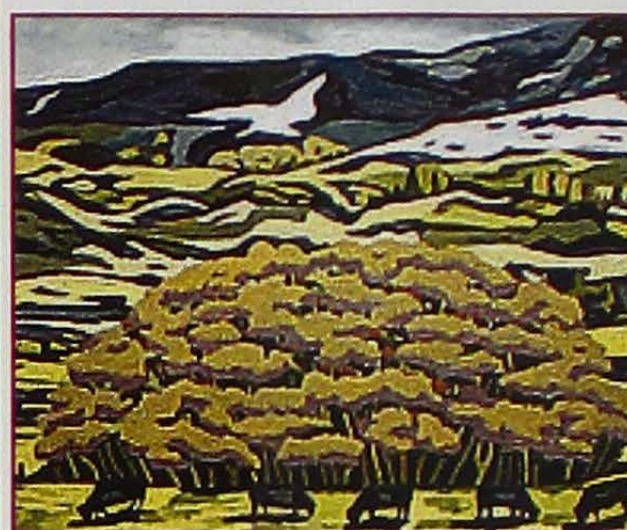
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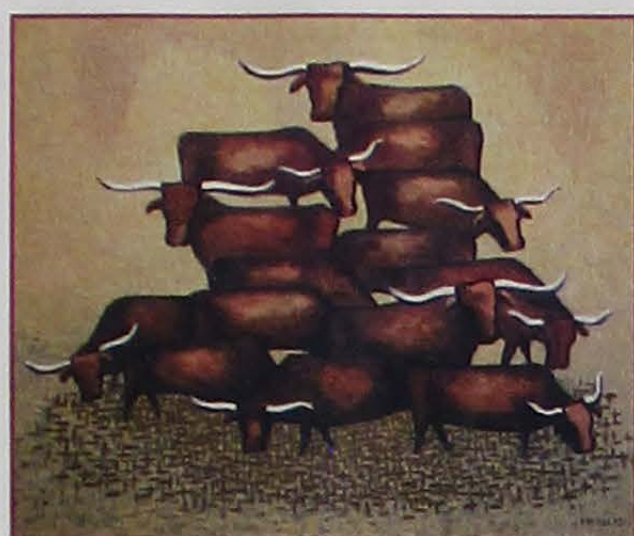
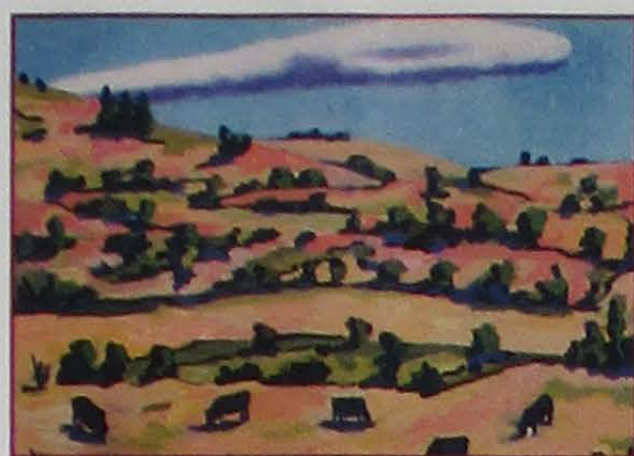


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Clean Up the Garden

(But Not Too Much)

BY JAN RIGGENBACH

A little fall cleaning in the garden is good. Although I look forward to garden cleanup with about as much enthusiasm as I have for a thorough fall housecleaning, I do like the results: fewer problems with diseases and insects.

Take peonies, for example. People who grow peonies soon discover that it's a good idea to cut the stems and remove all the foliage after frost every fall. This simple step helps prevent ugly diseases such as leaf blotch and gray mold that ruin foliage and flowers. After removing the foliage, I also like to put down a layer of fresh mulch to make sure new shoots emerging in spring won't be exposed to these fungus diseases.

(Note: This advice refers to garden peonies and Itoh hybrids, both of which die to the ground in winter. If you're growing tree peonies, treat them like a shrub: rake up fallen leaves and allow the stems to remain.)

Remove fallen leaves under roses and spread new mulch to help protect the plants from black spot, another fungus disease common in Midwest gardens.

Also cut and remove the foliage of perennials such as garden phlox and beebalm that are subject to powdery mildew.

Pull out dead iris foliage to remove borer eggs before they have a chance to hatch and bore into the rhizomes.

Nowhere is garden cleanup more important than in the vegetable garden and orchard. Removing spent foliage stops serious fungus diseases such as leaf spot, blight, crown rot and anthracnose from overwintering in the garden.

A thorough cleanup in the vegetable garden also helps control a number of insect pests, including squash bugs, grasshoppers, and many different kinds of beetles that attack crops such as cucumbers, eggplants, beans, and asparagus.

If you rake up leaves under grapevines and remove dried-up fruits, called mummies, you'll go a long way in combating black rot. Do the same with fruit trees to help lessen future problems such as apple scab and leaf spot diseases.

Sometimes the hardest part of garden cleanup is in knowing when to stop. A little cleanup is good, but a lot is not necessarily better. It isn't necessary to remove all of the shade-tree leaves that mulch garden edges.

Leaf litter accumulates on the ground, providing beneficial microorganisms, soil nutrients and organic matter, as well as a favorite place for birds to forage. Many plants still have seeds that feed wild birds in winter. Some plants, such as chrysanthemums, are more likely to survive winter when not cut back to the ground in fall.

And then there's the beauty: Dried seed heads, rustling grasses, and subtle colors.

Black-eyed Susan and other dried seed heads add beauty to the fall and winter garden. Photo by Jan Rigenbach



Giving Back in

Runners of the 14th annual Hope Run for Hospice in Ames. Contributed Photo.

Fitness

BY KECIA PLACE-FENCL

November is the time of year when we are all reminded of giving thanks and giving back. There are many ways one can give back to others in the fitness world. Here are just a few ideas:

Volunteer

- Volunteer at a race. Endurance races can not exist without volunteers to help at registration, aid stations, and the

finish line area. Volunteering is so rewarding, inspiring and a great way to give back to other athletes.

Participate

- Participate in a charity event. There are many local races that benefit charities such as the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, the John Stoddard Cancer Center, the Alzheimer's Association, Friendship Ark Homes, Arthritis Research Grants, etc.

With a little research, you can find the perfect charity race for you and give back to a cause that means the most to you.

Donate

- Donate gently used running shoes to Youth and Shelter Services. There are many local kids and teenagers who do not have suitable athletic shoes. By donating your gently used running shoes, you are providing opportunities for youth and young adults

to participate in a variety of athletic endeavors that they might not otherwise be able to participate in.

- Donate your race medals to medals4mettle.org, which is a nonprofit organization, where the mission is "to provide an opportunity for endurance athletes and runners to pay it forward by enabling the gifting and awarding of earned medals to others who demonstrate similar mettle, or courage, as they battle serious and debilitating illnesses."

SAVOR

Enjoy the best of Pumpkin

BY KATHLEEN PURVIS
THE CHARLOTTE OBSERVER
(MCT)

Have we gone just a little pumpkin-crazy this year, people? Pumpkin Oreos, pumpkin coffee drinks, pumpkin-pie spice.

You can't blame comedian John Oliver for his recent rant: It all tastes a bit like a candle.

But fall is too brief every year, and it's a shame to waste your time and calories on junky pumpkin. Instead, we can offer a few solutions:

Get better pumpkin stuff.

Don't leave your annual pumpkin consumption in the hands of people who would waste it on instant pie filling and pumpkin pie-scented body spray. Instead, turn to a chef who knows what he's doing with it, like Ashley Quick at Stagioni.

"The only canned pumpkin I saw growing up was my grandma making pumpkin pie," he says.

Instead, Quick gets blue Hubbards from Harmony Ridge Farms near Winston-Salem and roasts them in a wood-burning oven to draw out moisture and caramelize the natural sugars. He's careful about the

seasoning, sticking with herbs like lemon thyme, fresh bay leaves, salt and pepper.

"And lemon juice – it brightens it up, so it's not so flat. It gives it a little zing."

He turns that roasted pumpkin into a couple of things on the seasonal menu. There's the creamy Early Pumpkin Soup, garnished with shaved lobster mushrooms, pickled celery, celery leaves and a few drops of smoked vinegar. And a pasta dish, pumpkin-filled Agnolotti, topped with beech mushrooms, butter-nut squash cooked in its own juices, a brown butter sauce, a sprinkling of grated amaretti cookies and a tiny bit of pecorino cheese.

Get better pumpkin-pie spice.

Some of the backlash over pumpkin-everything may be a misunderstanding about what we're tasting. Just dyeing something orange doesn't make it pumpkin.

What you really taste in fall is pumpkin-pie spice, that classic combination of cinnamon, ginger, allspice and cloves. It's similar to apple pie spice, sometimes called baking spice. But what sets pumpkin-pie spice apart is

the clove, says Amy McCabe, who owns Savory Spice Shop at Atherton Mill with her husband, Scott.

"Clove is going to give you a warm undertone, an edgy warmth," she says. "People think the pumpkin-pie spice is going to taste like pumpkin. It's really about the clove."

Some chefs and creative cooks have started playing with that idea of edginess and warmth by adding ground Aleppo pepper, which has a fruity heat.

The pumpkin-pie spice McCabe makes in her shop also has nutmeg and mace. At home, where she's been experimenting with pumpkin pies, she also likes to add cardamom, which has a complex, floral flavor that might be familiar to you from chai tea mixtures.

While you can buy pumpkin-pie spice anywhere, McCabe encourages you to consider mixing your own, so you can cater to your own taste, or buying it from a small shop – like, say, Savory Spice – that makes it fresh.

Take that, pumpkin pie spice Pringles.

Get it while you can.

When Dave Trauner is on his ice cream food truck,

Sticks and Cones, he notices a lot about what kind of treats we want and when we want them.

The desire for pumpkin, he says, hits early in September, while it's still warm around here, and peaks by the end of October. And then, poof, pumpkin is gone before the pilgrim decorations come out.

"People drown in pumpkin, and then the holidays come," he says.

This year, he's been doing two pumpkin treats: For the Smashing Pumpkin, he layers pumpkin cobbler with soft-serve vanilla ice cream and caramel, tops it with whipped cream and drizzles it with caramel.

He also makes cream puffs, fills them with pumpkin mousse and ice cream and drizzles them with chocolate and caramel. What does he call that? "Cream Puffs and Pumpkin Mousse." (Yes, he actually laughed when he said that.)

"You know, our nation loves pumpkin," Traun says. "Over the last several years, it's gotten more popular. Right now, pumpkin's in vogue."

In other words: Don't worry if you miss it, Linus. All this great pumpkin stuff will probably be back next year.



Falling for fall

Home decoration ideas that get you thinking autumn

PAIGE JONES
THE FREDERICK NEWS-POST, MD.
(MCT)

Shorter days, longer nights and colder temperatures serve as a reminder to pack away the beach balls, swimsuits and shorts to prepare for the arrival of a new season: autumn.

For many, preparing for autumn includes getting the children ready for the first weeks of school, pulling the warm sweaters and boots out of storage and the re-emergence of pumpkin-flavored everything. But getting ready for a new season also includes atmospherical changes — like your house.

"You don't have to do anything major, but it can make a big difference," said Andrea Longnecker, an employee at the downtown furnishing and interior decor store Dream House.

Adding small decorations like mini pumpkins, fall-themed candle holders and floral stems are easy, budget-friendly ways to spruce up your house for fall and capture the season, according to Longnecker.

"A pop of fall without the huge investment," she said, pointing to various autumnal displays in the store.

Simply by incorporating the colors orange, red and brown into your decor can bring a more autumnal, warmer feel to your home. Pillows, throws and ribbons are all items that can be altered or purchased for a moderate price, but have a huge impact on your home, Longnecker said.

To avoid redecorating your home again for the winter holidays and stay within budget, place orange-, brown- or red-colored items at the bottom

Break out the cozy throws, pump up pillows and (visit) your candle inventory.

of a candle holder or glass canister, such as candy corn, pine cones or uncracked hazelnuts and walnuts. Even something as simple as a fall-themed tablecloth or wreath on the door can add an autumnal vibe, Longnecker said.

People tend to have "smaller ideas for the fall season and go all out for Christmas," Longnecker said. She suggested those who want to spend little time decorating for fall should use decor that will carry over into the winter holidays, such as autumn-colored ornaments or pine cones.

"Fall is a time to prepare for the holidays," said AnnMarie Farran, the owner of Pure Home, a furnishings store in Frederick. "Break out the cozy throws, pump up pillows and (visit) your candle inventory."

For candles, Farran said she personally prefers Saltaire by Mer-Sea & Co. for a fresh, outdoorsy smell with the reminiscing feel of summer. But typically the smell of soups and stews

cooking in the kitchen can also fill up the house, giving it an unintended fall feeling, she said.

With the shorter days and longer nights comes the need for better indoor lighting.

"We sell a lot of lamps in the fall," Farran said.

Customers can choose between lamps for task lighting, in which the light is directed in a specific direction, or real illumination, which serves the purpose of adding more light to a room. Farran recommended the brand Visual Comfort & Co. for lamps.

As for other fall decorations, Farran said she keeps a vase of fresh flowers on her table at home, changing them with availability of the market.

"You want to keep flowers on the table," she said. "It's joyful."

In her own home, Farran said her main seasonal decorations are with blankets and flowers, which she said is "how you can tell what season it is in my home."

For those who take pride in creating their own decorations or want to stick to a small budget, visit Pinterest for DIY ideas under the "DIY home projects" and "Holidays & events" categories of the site for fall decor inspiration and instructions.

Follow Paige Jones on Twitter: @paigeeleejones.





Homemade posole spices up fall celebrations

A fall dinner party in the Land Park backyard of Bernadette Gutierrez showcases posole, surrounded by a variety of garnishes and Día de los Muertos holiday decor. PHOTO BY MANNY CRISOSTOMO/SACRAMENTO BEE/MCT

BY CHRIS MACIAS
THE SACRAMENTO BEE
(MCT)

The smell wafting through Bernadette Gutierrez's Land Park home signifies a change in seasons. It's the comforting aroma of hominy slowly simmering in a pot with savory pork and a deep red broth that's ready to be sopped up with a tortilla.

The arrival of fall means it's time for posole. This Mexican soup ranks as a go-to meal as the weather cools and an ideal dish for holiday entertaining. Posole is meant

to be cooked in large amounts, the foundation for many a Mexican family meal on New Year's Day, or for grubbing down with the bros while watching football on a chilly Sunday.

"When you want to invite a lot of people over and get together, it's just a great food," said Gutierrez, as wisps of steam escaped from the pot. "You get all these great kinds of flavors. It's a celebration food."

Gutierrez is known locally as a kind of Mexican-American version of Martha Stewart, given her expertise in Mexican cooking and home entertaining. She's

studied culinary methods in Mexico and also teaches cooking classes around town. When Darrell Corti is hankering for a home-cooked Mexican meal, he's known to turn to Gutierrez.

That's to say, Gutierrez makes a mean pot of posole. The hominy-based soup, sometimes spelled "pozole," developed in Mexico during Mesoamerican times. Corn was not only a food staple of the Aztecs and other pre-Columbian peoples, it was a sacred symbol of fertility. Pots of posole, which were often consumed for celebrations, are pictured in Aztec codices from the 16th

"If you have really good ingredients, sometimes it's good to keep things even simpler,"

century.

Five centuries later, posole remains a prized Mexican food. The hominy gives this soup plenty of heft. Combined with a chili-infused broth, and chunks of pork or chicken, a bowl of posole is the perfect cure for hunger pangs — and hangovers, in some circles. Even without meat, vegetarian versions of this soup still satisfy.

When making a pot at home, the question becomes, "How much time do I have?"

For posole purists, making a batch requires many steps and an array of ingredients. Gutierrez generally dedicates two days to making posole.

One day is spent constructing a pork-based broth and preparing her hominy. She uses French techniques of browning meat and bones to build a soup stock, which is cooled overnight so the fat can easily be skimmed.

Hominy can be especially high maintenance if prepared from scratch, and the process can take hours. It requires cleaning the dried corn kernels, soaking them in lime (calcium oxide, not the fruit) to remove the outside hull, and then simmering them to the point of tenderness.

The spicy red sauce that Gutierrez adds to the broth on day two requires three different chilies as well as a number of toasted herbs and spices.

"Spices and herbs are the most essential part of making a good soup, and using the meat and fond (bits from the bottom of the pan) to build the broth," said Gutierrez. "If I have the time and luxury, I like to do everything from scratch."

The easiest way to trim posole-cooking time is to opt for canned hominy, which is easily found in Mexican and American markets. Or home cooks can

opt for an excellent prepared hominy from Rancho Gordo, a Napa-based retailer of heirloom beans and specialty Mexican foods. Rancho Gordo's dried hominy has already been prepared with lime. After soaking for a few hours, the hominy is ready to be simmered in water with onion for about 90 minutes. The hominy blooms during that time into chunky kernels that make for a hearty and texturally pleasing bowl of posole.

"Canned hominy has the romance of chicken cartilage in the mouth, and practically no flavor," said Steve Sando, founder of Rancho Gordo. "If you're using real (hominy), it smells like this giant, wet tortilla. You can't help but stick your head in the pot and take it in."

For cooking up the optimal batch of Rancho Gordo's hominy, Sando offers these tips.

"They need a six- to eight-hour soak, or else they will split too fast and fall apart," said Sando. "Then, I bring them to a hard, rapid boil to show them who's boss, then turn down to the gentlest of simmers to however long it takes. It should come to a point when it's al dente, but shouldn't be chalky."

Sando opts for an overall simpler approach to assembling the final soup. His recipe for posole verde, a tomatillo-based version with a green broth, calls for pre-made vegetable or chicken stock. The recipe doesn't include chicken or pork, though either meat certainly would work with this mix.

The key, whether taking two days or a few hours to cook, is to source quality goods. Rancho Gordo's product line includes authentic Mexican oregano and fresh de arbol chilies grown in Northern California for packing extra heat into that

posole. They're available online at www.ranchogordo.com, at the company's home base near downtown Napa or in San Francisco's Ferry Building.

"If you have really good ingredients, sometimes it's good to keep things even simpler," said Sando.

Posole can work as a farm-to-fork-themed dish, given its use of herbs, vegetables and other produce that's grown locally. Gutierrez, whose roots are in the highlands of Jalisco, Mexico, bases her posole on a recipe that used ingredients grown near the family ranch. Closer to Land Park, many of them can be found at nearby farmers markets or in a backyard planter. Some of the chilies used in her red sauce are picked fresh from a local garden, and then dehydrated at home.

"The ranch in Jalisco had access to a garden and good meats," said Gutierrez. "They really used good herbs and spices. That's why I love Sacramento. There's all these gardens and ranches everywhere."

But as with all carefully crafted soups, careful attention must be given to tasting throughout the process. Gutierrez aims for depth in her posole broth, aided by the roasted bones and fond. The red sauce adds brightness and a little bit of tang, not to mention the traditional piquant kick. But she's careful not to go overboard. Eating posole shouldn't feel like a challenge.

"My dad used to say you don't want a lot of heat on your lips," said Gutierrez. "You want the chiles mostly for flavor."

With the posole fully cooked, it's just about time to share. Gutierrez awaits the arrival of friends and neighbors, who will gather in the backyard for an early fall dinner party. The table sports a Dia de los Muertos

decor, with sugar skulls signifying the Mexican tradition of celebrating the spirits from Oct. 31 through Nov. 2. Gutierrez's fresh cooked flan and pan de muerto, the seasonally themed sweet bread, will be served for dessert.

But the posole will take center stage, with an array of garnishes. Thinly cut cabbage and sliced radish add crunchy counterpoints to the savory soup, and a bit of a cooling effect. A little bit of lime juice (for ping of citrus) and a dash or two of oregano take an already superb Mexican soup to another level of tastiness.

"I have to put everything on there," said Gutierrez, about her perfect bowl of posole. "I love it."

POSOLE ROJO Serves 10

This recipe by Bernadette Gutierrez is geared for those who have the time and inclination to take their posole to the next level. Gutierrez prefers to make the pork broth the day before serving posole, then store in the refrigerator overnight, and skims the fat the following day. She adds the rojo sauce (see accompanying recipe) and hominy to the broth, then simmers until the hominy is tender and soaked up some of the broth. The pork shoulder is added shortly before serving to avoid overcooking the meat.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 pounds pork spare ribs
- 2 pounds pork shanks
- 10 pounds pork shoulder
- 10 plus 2 1/2 cups water
- 3 tablespoons kosher salt
- 2 teaspoons allspice
- 2 teaspoons peppercorns
- 5 dried bay leaves
- 1 head garlic

- 2 white onions
- 1 bunch fresh oregano
- 2 bunches fresh cilantro
- Two 29-ounce cans hominy, drained and rinsed, or 1 pound dried hominy treated with lime

INSTRUCTIONS

Roast pork spare ribs and shanks in oven at 400 degrees, browning on each side, approximately 30 minutes each side. When browned, remove ribs and shanks from oven and add to large stock pot with 10 cups water.

Remove fat from roasting pan. Add 2 1/2 cups boiling water to roasting pan and remove the fond (caramelized bits) with a spatula. Add fond to the large pot of water.

In a separate pot, brown pork shoulder on the stove. When browned on all sides, remove the meat and set aside. Drain fat from pot. Add small amount of boiling water to pot and release fond with spatula. Add fond to pot of water containing the ribs and shanks.

Add remaining ingredients, including pork shoulder, to the pot of broth. Bring broth to a hard boil, then immediately drop heat to a simmer. Cook for 2 1/2 hours, or until pork shoulder is tender.

Remove bones and pork shoulder from broth, and set aside. Store pork shoulder overnight in container.

Strain broth into a large container and let cool, allowing fat to rise to the top. Once cooled, store broth overnight in the refrigerator. On the following day, skim top layer of fat.

To assemble the posole, add 4 cups of rojo sauce to broth. Taste for spiciness; adjust with additional sauce as needed.

Add hominy to broth and simmer until hominy is tender, approximately 30 minutes if using canned hominy, or approximately 2 hours if using fresh hominy. Salt to taste.

While broth simmers, pull the pork shoulder into chunks with your hands. Add pork shoulder to broth shortly before serving.

Ladle posole in bowls and serve immediately. Garnish with shredded cabbage, sliced radish, lime and oregano.

ROJO SAUCE Makes 7 cups

Use this red "rojo" sauce to bring out the full spiciness, depth and color of your posole. Toasting the herbs, spices and chilies helps release maximum flavors. This sauce can also be used for enchiladas,

tamales and other Mexican foods.

INGREDIENTS

- 12 dried New Mexico chilies
- 16 dried guajillo chilies
- 8 dried pasilla chilies
- 7 cups water or pork broth
- 2 teaspoons cumin seeds, toasted
- 2 teaspoons dried oregano, toasted
- 6 cloves garlic, lightly toasted
- 1 white onion, sliced and toasted
- Salt to taste

INSTRUCTIONS

Roast all chilies until they begin to puff. Be careful that the skins don't turn black.

Cut stems off roasted chilies and remove seeds.

In a blender combine all chilies, spices, herbs, garlic and onion with 7 cups of water or pork broth. Blend until smooth.

POSOLE VERDE Serves 6

This version of posole by Steve Sando of Rancho Gordo doesn't contain meat, but is still packed with satiating fresh flavors. The key is to cook a batch of dried hominy instead of the gummy kind that comes in a can. Look for the excellent dried hominy from Rancho Gordo of Napa (www.ranchogordo.com), along with the spices and chilies used in this recipe.

INGREDIENTS

- 1/4 pound Rancho Gordo posole (whole dried hominy)
- 1 1/2 onions, white or red, peeled and halved
- Salt
- 4 garlic cloves, peeled
- 15 to 20 tomatillos, paper skins removed
- 2 poblano chilies
- 1 serrano chili
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1 cup coarsely chopped cilantro
- 2 teaspoons dried Mexican oregano
- 1 1/2 quarts vegetable or chicken broth
- Freshly ground black pepper

INSTRUCTIONS

Soak posole overnight in water to cover generously. Drain.

Place it in a saucepan with fresh water to cover generously.

Add 1/2 onion, bring to a simmer, cover partially and cook at a gentle simmer until the corn kernels are tender, 2 to 3 hours; many will split open. Season with salt and

cool in the liquid.

On a hot, dry griddle or skillet, roast the remaining halved onions, garlic, tomatillos and chilies, turning occasionally, until they are charred and slightly softened, 15 to 20 minutes. Work in batches if necessary.

Put the roasted poblano chilies in a paper bag to steam until cool.

Transfer the other vegetables to a bowl and let cool, collecting their juices.

Skin the poblanos, discarding seeds and stems. Discard the serrano chili stem but don't skin or seed.

Put all the roasted vegetables in a blender, in batches if necessary, and puree until smooth.

Heat the oil in a large stockpot over moderate heat.

Add the vegetable puree and adjust heat to maintain a simmer. Cook, stirring occasionally, for 10 minutes to blend the flavors.

In the blender, puree the cilantro, oregano and 1 cup of the broth. Add to the vegetable mixture along with 4 cups additional broth.

Drain the posole and add it to the pot. Season with salt and pepper and return to a simmer. Thin with additional broth if necessary. Serve in warm bowls.



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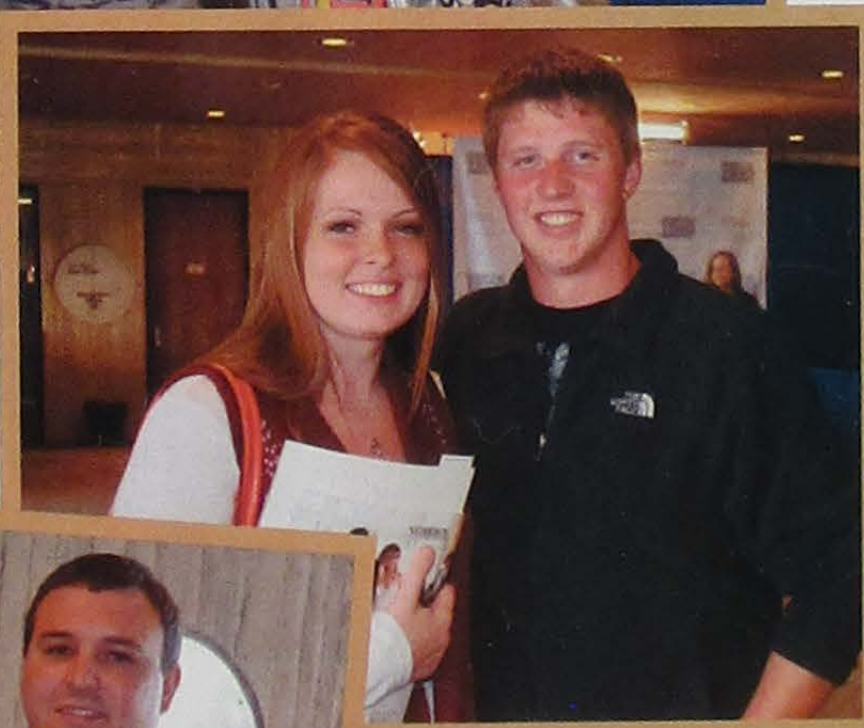




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LOKKEN

Getting is there too. Getting paid well for doing what we love. Getting satisfaction from

creating a look that pleases. Getting gifts from guests especially in the coming season. Getting ahead by helping others. Getting to feel great every day for what we love to do. Getting to change lives sometimes after very sad things happen or when joyous things happen.

I can say 'we' not because I am a salon professional but because I have been lucky in life to be born into the greatest industry – beauty. I can look around every day thankful for all the stylists and students who have made my life better. This month I want to celebrate some of those people.

Robert went on to work on

the road show of "Wicked" and is too busy to stop in but nonetheless sent a relative to our school to study. Thank you.

Brady wanted to be a stylist since childhood and worked in the salon until allergies prevented her continuing. She is my partner in PCI, a natural leader, and consults schools teaching students how to grow their income before they leave school. Thank you.

Aurilla is now expanding her personal growth working with a professional products company. As a published stylist and assistant to the world's authority on beautiful updos,

she took the time to teach our students what her world is like. Thank you.

Linda who left college to become a successful salon owner and partner in a major salon in Ames and partner in PCI shares her expertise with students. Thank you.

Thomas who has taken his career to another level as an artist for a major brand and been published industry magazines. Thank you.

Coral is just out of school working as a stylist in Minneapolis and has goals to become a top salon professional

ide.

teaching others along the way. Her cousin Katie was one of our first graduates in the Minnesota school. Thank you both.

Kathi will be surprised to be mentioned and always brought her best to work in my mom's salon and is now a successful salon owner in her own right. Her energy is amazing and her laughter still rings in my ears. Thank you.

Stephanie is a salon owner in eastern Iowa who sent two of her three daughters to us to train for the salon.

Natalie works in Denver and

Shelby works with Stephanie. Thank you.

Angie is my business partner in the

school and consults schools and salons teaching them business skills for the salon. She never forgets what it's like to work behind the chair and did that for 20 years and is forever grateful for her career and shares that love with everyone. Thank you.

And there are too many more to mention. Thank you mom for starting me on this path. Thank you to all the salon and school people who have helped me grow and share that growth. So for me it is about all their giving and all their getting in all the positive ways that have shaped our beauty industry right here in Ames, Iowa.

Thank you.

Mary Clare Lokken is the owner of PCI Academy in Ames. Reach her via email at mclokken@gmail.com.

**General Contracting,
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We enjoyed our beautiful porch this summer. The skillful and courteous crew who built the porch will remain a cheerful and pleasant memory of this spring's construction. Thanks to Geisingers' for sending us all this great screened porch weather as well.

*Cordially,
Martha Rasmussen*



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Choose Balance



What does balance mean as we approach the magical, wonderful, stressful time of year

The November and December holidays are almost upon us; We all have our lists of "stuff" that we need to do to create a perfect family holiday experience. Is that your plan for this holiday season? And is it even an admirable goal?

I remember my mom all tense and tired from trying to make everything just perfect. Once she forgot to serve the mashed potatoes; it was enough to bring her to tears. Tears you say? We all know, it wasn't really about the potatoes; it was about the expectation that she could and had to create a perfect holiday.



KAREN PETERSEN

Today I would say she needed a little balance in her expectations. What exactly does that mean as we approach that magical, wonderful, stressful time of the year?

What is Balance

Nutritionists tell us we should eat a balanced diet, which means we can eat almost anything we want, in moderation. We balance our checkbook; some of us to the penny, for others close is good enough. Analysts talk about world trade balance, usually a large number. And then a much smaller, but important, number ... your credit card balance. There are New Balance shoes. And sometimes we get thrown off balance.

Balance could be a harmonious design.

I like to imagine my family holidays as a harmonious design. Of course that means I must purposely create that harmonious holiday. Choices need to be made about how to use time, money and energy.

Another way to think about balance is balancing on one foot. This is when the focus is on one part of life. Sometimes our holidays are out of balance because we focus quantity not quality. If your time, money and energy are constantly in precarious unbalance, it may be because you have not determined what is really important to you.

And then "the balance" can be what is left after everything else is taken away.

What is left over certainly won't make great memories.

I asked several friends about their favorite holiday memories. Here are just a few:

- Polishing the silver with her grandmother
- Cracking and picking out black walnuts
- Making spritz cookies
- Christmas caroling with friends and then hot chocolate and cookies

What are your favorite memories? Are those memories about money or are they about people and experiences? Think back to last year; how did you spend your time? What people were in your life? Where did you go? What gave you joy?

What do you want more of in your life? This information will help you decide how you want to allocate your money, time and energy this holiday season.

Unfortunately it is too easy to say, "Not now, I am already on the path to do more and more to make this the most perfect holiday season ever. Find the time now to think about how you want to spend the next two months. Sometimes the very act of taking the time to think about how you want to spend your time is all it takes to begin the process.

You might wonder why I am focusing on time, happiness and people. What does it have to do with money? It has everything to do with choosing how you spend your money. Money is not the goal. Money is just what we use to live a rich life.

This month remember to be thankful that you don't have to have a frantic November and December; you can chose to create a calm, memorable, balanced and perfect holiday for you and your family. ❖

Karen L Petersen CFP® CFA™ is a fee based financial advisor. You can contact her at 515 232 2785 or karen@mymorethanmoney.net Registered Representative, Securities offered through Cambridge Investment Research, Inc., a Broker/Dealer, Member FINRA/SIPC. Investment Advisor Representative, Cambridge Investment Research Advisors, Inc., a Registered Investment Advisor.

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PUMPKIN PEANUT BUTTER DIP

Serves: 8

ALL YOU NEED:

- 1 (15 oz) can Hy-Vee pumpkin
- 1 (5.3 oz) container Hy-Vee plain Greek yogurt
- 3/4 cup Hy-Vee HealthMarket powdered peanut butter
- 1/2 cup stevia, Splenda or sweetener
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp pumpkin pie spice

ALL YOU DO:

Place all ingredients in a small bowl; stir until smooth and creamy. Serve with apple slices or pretzels. Keep refrigerated and serve chilled.

Nutrition per serving: Calories 45, 1 g fat, 4 g carbohydrate, 2 g fiber, 2 g sugar, 6 g protein

Source: adapted from Dashingdish.com



This information is not intended as medical advice. Please consult a medical professional for individual advice.